



NEWS RELEASE

801 – 228th Avenue SE • Sammamish, WA 98075 • Phone: 425-295-0500 • Fax: 425-295-0600

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CONTACT: Tim Larson
Communications Manager
425-295-0555 (Desk)
425-260-4034 (Mobile)

City's permit for E. Lake Sammamish Trail requires King County to narrow two sections

SAMMAMISH – Having already paved and widened the East Lake Sammamish Trail at the north end of the city, King County is now preparing to do the same for 1.3 miles of the trail at the south end of Sammamish. Today, the city issued what's officially known as a "shoreline substantial development permit" for the southern segment – identified as South Segment A – but it contains significant conditions.

In two sections totaling approximately 550 feet, the county is required to narrow the width of South Segment A so that 63 significant trees and other vegetation can be preserved. In those sections, the permit requires the county to narrow the trail "a minimum of three feet, or as necessary" to achieve that goal. Without that narrowing, the standard width of the trail is 18 feet – 12 feet of pavement width and three feet of shoulder and clearance on both sides.

"The emphasis on preserving trees reflects a growing sentiment in our community," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "Just last October we passed an emergency ordinance establishing interim tree regulations that require the preservation of more trees. Although a trail like this is exempt from those regulations, we feel it's important to set a good example and show residents that their values are being taken seriously."

Another permit condition requires the county to either redesign or move a storm water vault so the impact on nearby residents will be reduced. Yazici credits King County Executive Dow Constantine, Deputy King County Executive Fred Jarrett, King County Council member Kathy Lambert, and the leaders and members of the Sammamish City Council for very productive discussions on the trail.

"Given the many good-faith conversations we've had, I certainly hope the county will find the permit conditions reasonable and won't appeal the permit," Yazici said.

The city's involvement in the King County project intensified when a South Segment A design plan that was 90 percent complete surfaced in February. City Council members and residents alike were upset that the plans did not reflect the feedback members of the community and city officials had submitted to the county. In response, the county issued a design plan that did consider the feedback and was 95 percent complete. After ordering an additional two-week public comment period in June, the city today issued its permit based on the 95 percent plan.

South Segment A runs from the southern city limits at Southeast 43rd Way up to Southeast 33rd Street. The third and final section of the trail-paving project – identified as South Segment B – will run from Southeast 33rd Street up to Northeast Inglewood Hill Road. King County has not yet submitted a permit application for South Segment B.

The shoreline substantial development permit can be viewed at Sammamish City Hall or on the city website (www.sammamish.us). The county must also obtain a grading permit from the city before construction begins.

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